

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

LANDMARK
C E N T E R
Arts
History
Community

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St
Paul



Saint Paul
Downtown
Alliance

Saint Paul

stpdowntownalliance.org



@stpldowntown

401 NORTH ROBERT STREET | SUITE 150 | SAINT PAUL, MN 55101

Greetings friends,

We all learned a lot about flexibility in 2020. In 2021 the Saint Paul Downtown Alliance entered its fourth year ready for anything, with a campaign designed to welcome workers and visitors back downtown. By putting a premium on collaboration and remaining nimble, the Alliance led downtown's response to the pandemic in a way that we are extremely proud of.

While we didn't see the full return to office that we'd hoped for in 2021, our efforts had a tremendous impact. We were able to collectively rally around the goal of welcoming and encouraging people back downtown. We also collaborated with dozens of partner organizations to put on hundreds of events and activations for thousands of people.

Another huge milestone in 2021 was the launch (years in the making) of the Saint Paul Downtown Improvement District (SPDID), which went into effect on January 1. This is a private sector-led effort to increase safety, vibrancy and cleanliness in downtown, and Saint Paul's first Special Service District. During its first year, the SPDID operationalized the SafetyComms network, a robust communications and information-sharing program among downtown buildings and public safety partners. It also deployed Street Team Ambassadors who are highly visible downtown, picking up trash, removing graffiti and helping visitors with wayfinding, all while acting as another set of eyes to improve safety.

We're looking forward to continuing this work in 2022 and can promise a lot of new and exciting projects are on the horizon. Our hope remains high, and we are encouraged every day by the businesses and individuals that continue to innovate, create, and rally together to build a strong and vibrant downtown Saint Paul.

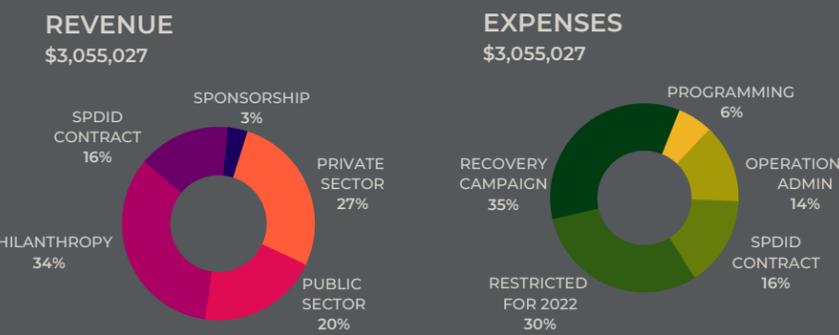
Thank you,



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2021 FINANCIALS



DOWNTOWN BY THE NUMBERS



In 2021, downtown's residential population surpassed 10,000 for the first time, thanks to hundreds of new housing units coming online. We estimate that throughout 2021 roughly 35% - 40% of downtown workers returned to the office, while many continued working from home offices. As we continue to monitor permanent changes brought on by COVID-19, it will be especially important to track not only the total number of jobs, but also trends in how people work in downtown

Despite the pandemic's impact on various aspects of downtown's economy, overall property values and investments increased substantially in 2021. Changes in office usage patterns will continue to evolve over the next several years.



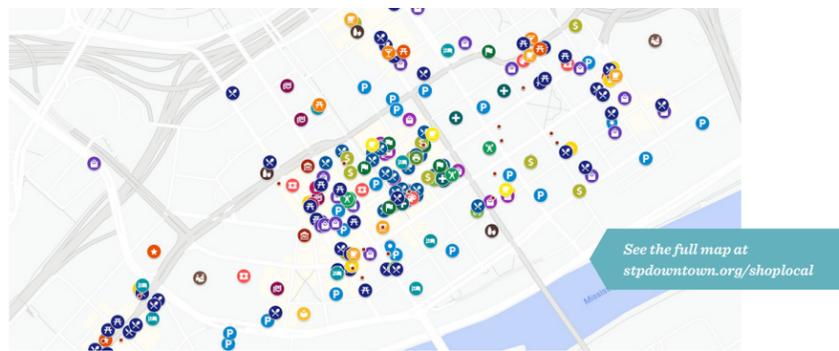
The extension of the Capital City Bikeway down 9th Street connected more amenities across downtown and more of its adjacent neighborhoods. A lack of daily commuters slashed public transit usage.

TRACKING BUSINESS & DEVELOPMENT

2021 saw ongoing fluctuations and challenges for our small business community. The downtown restaurant and retail map created in 2020 continued to be a valuable asset not only for workers and visitors returning downtown, but for keeping a pulse on new businesses opening like Bullvino's Steakhouse, KJ's hideaway, and more.



ADVOCACY & DEVELOPMENT



ADVOCATING FOR DOWNTOWN

Public safety continued to be an important issue for downtown stakeholders. In addition to hosting monthly public safety check-in calls to hear updates from all of downtown's public safety and law enforcement partners, the Alliance also lobbied for more than half a million federal American Rescue Plan dollars to be directed toward additional safe and clean resources in downtown.

Long-term goals of driving more vitality into downtown Saint Paul remain core to the mission of the Alliance. Advocacy is an important strategic initiative that ranges from short-term priorities of improving public safety needs and assisting businesses with permitting or events, to long-term advocacy with economic development partners to prioritize investments and opportunities in downtown essential to city-wide and regional health.

See more downtown development details at stpdowntown.org/development



THE 370 SETS
The Alliance partnered with Osborn370 to host a weekly happy hour and music series over the summer for both building tenants and passerbys.



MINNESOTA WILD PLAYOFFS
After a crazy NHL season, we were ready to welcome playoff hockey.





Stay up to date on downtown events by visiting WelcomeBackStPL.com

EVENTS & ACTIVATIONS

EVENTS EVERY DAY, IN ALL CORNERS OF DOWNTOWN

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

We made a promise to deliver 300 events and activations to safely welcome workers and visitors back to downtown Saint Paul. We ended up supporting, promoting and hosting a total of **344 events**.

By programming downtown every day of the week, morning, afternoon and evening we were able to attract a wide variety of event-goers. Morning fitness classes were frequented by early rising residents, lunch time buskers at the Science Museum welcomed families, happy hour music and performances on 7th Place and Ecolab Plaza and enticed those working downtown to linger a little longer.

Hundreds of thousands of people attended #WelcomeBackStPL events large and small in 2021. From old favorites like Lowertown Sounds and Jazz Fest to new activities like Rosé Fest, Roller Disco and Party in the Park, from outdoor fitness classes to pop-up concerts and more, we worked hard to get folks back into the swing of things.



VINAI & COMPANY

Award-winning chef Yia Vang brought one-of-a-kind culinary experiences to the Saint Paul Farmers Market, collaborating with a different local chef each month to create family-style, Hmong-fusion feasts.

LOWERTOWN SOUNDS

Each Thursday night during the summer, Mears Park was a sea of lawn chairs and picnic blankets as the beloved weekly music series returned after a COVID-19-induced hiatus. 2021 featured local musicians like Kiss the Tiger, Romantica, Lady Midnight and many others.



RICE PARK POWERED BY XCEL ENERGY

In November, hundreds gathered to watch more than 28,000 LED twinkle lights come on at the flip of the giant switch in Rice Park.



FITNESS IN THE PARK

Downtown gyms hosted free outdoor fitness classes multiple times per week over the summer, rain or shine!

MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCING StPL

In 2021, the Alliance **launched the StPL** brand, most visibly in the form of the giant StPL letters monument, which appeared in countless photos and videos across social media. The new brand has been years in the making and comes after more than 15,000 downtown workers, residents, and visitors weighed in.



#WELCOMEBACKSTPL

The #WelcomeBackStPL digital campaign featured more than **40 downtown insiders** – elected officials, artists, local historians, business owners and everyone in between – in **58 videos** sharing their favorite downtown stories, places and more, receiving **two million combined impressions** and **tens of thousands of views**.

Nordy brought us to Heimie's for a pre-game shave and haircut. No mullets were hurt during the filming of his video.



PARTY IN THE PARK

Alliance staff and partners welcomed kids and their families from across the metro to Mears Park to see Koo Koo Kanga Roo perform.



ROSÉ FEST

A torrential downpour didn't keep people home for the first Rosé Fest hosted downtown at Kellogg Mall Park, complete with a pink fountain!

AROUND (DOWN)TOWN NEWSLETTER

Workers and residents continue to rely on our weekly newsletter for news, events, and updates about downtown. Total subscribers **jumped 35%** this year, with **81% more** new subscribers than 2020.



ROLLER DISCO

The first-ever Friday night roller disco happened in Rice Park in September.



Larger than life

Over the summer, the giant StPL letters (measuring over 8' tall) were stationed in more than a dozen locations throughout downtown. They were tagged in countless photos and videos across social media, including local and national broadcasts. Keep an eye out for the next landing place.



The SCC & Street Team are here to help!

The Street Team is out seven days a week, from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.



They are available to:

- Give directions
- Remove graffiti
- Lend a hand
- Answer questions
- Provide a safety escort
- Make recommendations
- Remove sidewalk debris
- Solve problems

To request Street Team assistance, reach out to the SCC Dispatch. 651-236-0284 | info@spdidd.org



SAFE & CLEAN

SAINT PAUL'S FIRST IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A core mission of the Saint Paul Downtown Alliance was to work with downtown property owners and managers to determine the feasibility of establishing the first Special Service District (more commonly referred to as a Business or Downtown Improvement District) in the city. After three years of research, a 90-day pilot program in 2019, and a global pandemic nearly derailing efforts, a dedicated steering committee of property owners petitioned their peers for support and created the **Saint Paul Downtown Improvement District**.

The SPDID took effect on January 1, 2021. It includes the Safety Communications Center (SCC), which connects the various downtown public safety resources; the Street Team Ambassadors, who work in the public realm to keep downtown clean and offer assistance wherever needed; and the Director of Safety Strategies to oversee the program and work with downtown stakeholders.

SAFETYCOMMS NETWORK

During its first year the SPDID built out and operationalized the **SafetyComms network**, a robust communications and information-sharing channel among downtown buildings and public safety partners. Prior to 2021, nothing of its kind had existed in downtown. The SCC and SafetyComms network have assisted in deploying the Street Team to deescalate situations, coordinating with the Saint Paul Police Department to monitor issues that arise and proactively engaging with downtown stakeholders to improve downtown safety perceptions and outcomes.

MAINTAINING A DOWNTOWN THAT IS CLEAN, SAFE AND FRIENDLY

In 2021 the Alliance and the SPDID were able to leverage more than **\$500,000** of additional, one-time federal relief funds from the City to add 14 more Street Team Ambassadors to the staff – more than **quadrupling** their impact. The Street Team helped **thousands of visitors**, provided outreach referrals more than **600 times** and removed nearly **2,500 bags** of litter.

In June, July and August of 2021, downtown Saint Paul crime rates hit a **five-year low** thanks to efforts from and supplemental federal resources for the SPDID and coordination amongst SPPD, outreach organizations, and all public safety partners. During that same time, the overall crime rate in downtown was **23% lower** than 2020, and **10% lower** than the five-year average.

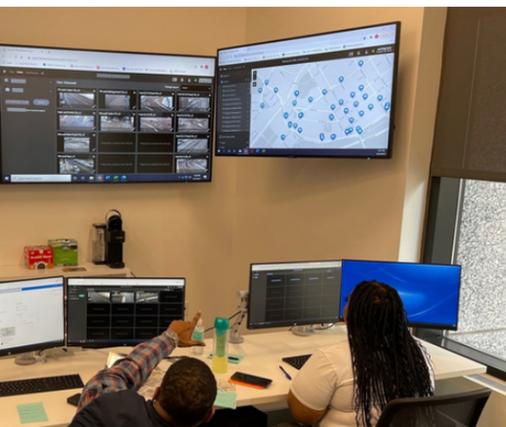


“The past year has been especially challenging for the hospitality industry. However, when we look at the results and the positive impact the SPDID has had on guest experience in its first year alone, we know that investing in SPDID programming is the right move to help all of our industries rebound.”

-Zachary Atherton-Ely, InterContinental & DoubleTree Hotels

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

George became a member of the Street Team after working as a volunteer with one of downtown's outreach partners.



Saint Paul
Downtown Improvement District

spdidd.org

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